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Builth Urban District

Report

of the

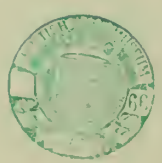
Medical Officer of Health

for the year 1953.

Officials.

Medical Officer of Health.....T.C.R.George,M.R.C.S.,
L.R.C.P.,
D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector.....Mr.E.V.Collins,M.S.I.A.



Builth Wells Urban District

Report of the Medical Officer of Health

1953

Mr.Chairman and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions and the state of the public health in the Builth Wells Urban District for the year 1953.

In the preparation of this report I have endeavoured to deal briefly with all matters within my responsibility regarding public health and preventive medicine and I have included all the subjects specifically requested by the Welsh Board of Health in Circular 1/54 (Wales)

Section 1. General and Vital Statistics.

Statistical Summary for the year 1953.

Area.....701 acres.
Population (Census,1951).....1708.
Population (Estimated at Midsummer 1953).....1561.
Number of inhabited houses.....548.

Live Births.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate for 1000 Pop.
Legitimate	13	10	23	
Illegitimate	1	0	1	
	14	10	24	15.4
Still Births	0	0	0	0
Deaths from all causes.	10	13	23	14.7

Maternal Deaths.....Nil.

Deaths under 1 year.
.....0. Rate per 1000 live births.....0.

Deaths from special causes.

Infectious disease.....Nil.
Tuberculosis of respiratory system...Nil.
Other tuberculous disease.....Nil.
Cancer.....4.

Area.

The Urban District of Builth Wells,which has an area of 701 acres, is situated in the northern part of the County of Breconshire.The surrounding country is agricultural in nature and farming is the predominant occupation of the surrounding residents.The district is also a holiday resort where advantage is taken of the medicinal springs in the neighbourhood.

Population. Census 1931.....1663.
Census 1951.....1708.

1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.	1948.	1949.	1950.	1951.	1952.	1953.
1645.	1631.	1617.	1576.	1539.	1707.	1674.	1674.	1638.	1576.	1561.

The above figures are the Registrar General's figures for the various years.

Builth Wells Urban District

The number of inhabited houses in the district was 548 giving an average number of 2.8 persons per house.

Births.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate.
1940	7	9	16	9.7.
1941	11	12	23	12.6.
1942	11	11	22	12.7.
1943	11	11	22	13.4.
1944	15	8	23	14.1.
1945	12	11	23	14.2.
1946	10	13	23	14.6.
1947	22	14	36	23.3.
1948	11	16	27	15.8.
1949	19	11	30	17.8.
1950	12	12	24	14.3.
1951	19	10	29	17.7.
1952	14	10	24	15.2.
1953	14	10	24	15.4.
England and Wales,1953				15.5.

The birthrate was slightly lower than the average for England and Wales,and higher than the deathrate for the district.

Deaths. After taking into account the outwardly and inwardly transferable deaths the net number of deaths registered amongst residents in the district is shown in the following table.

	Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate.
1940	13	21	34	20.6.
1941	14	17	31	16.8.
1942	17	11	28	16.1.
1943	19	20	39	23.7.
1944	8	12	20	12.2.
1945	4	10	14	8.6.
1946	18	14	32	20.3.
1947	13	12	25	16.2.
1948	10	9	19	11.1.
1949	13	16	29	17.3.
1950	20	16	36	21.5.
1951	10	10	20	12.2.
1952	14	13	27	17.0.
1953	10	13	23	14.7.
England and Wales,1953				11.4.

The deathrate for 1953 was therefore higher than the average for the whole of England and Wales,but lower than the birthrate for the district.

Still Births.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate.
1940	1	0	1	0.6.
1941	0	0	0	0.
1942	0	0	0	0.
1943	2	1	3	1.8.
1944	0	0	0	0.
1945	1	1	2	1.2.
1946	4	1	5	3.1.
1947	1	1	2	1.3.
1948	2	0	2	1.1.
1949	0	0	0	0.
1950	0	0	0	0.
1951	2	0	2	1.2.
1952	0	0	0	0.
1953	0	0	0	0.
England and Wales,1953				0.35.

The stillbirth rate for 1953 was therefore lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

Infantile Mortality. This is the number of deaths occurring in children of under one year of age. The rate is calculated per 1000 live births.

	Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate.
1940	0	0	0	0.
1941	0	0	0	0.
1942	2	1	3	136.
1943	2	1	3	136.
1944	1	0	1	43.
1945	0	0	0	0.
1946	0	1	1	43.
1947	0	1	1	27.
1948	0	0	0	0.
1949	1	0	1	33.
1950	0	0	0	0.
1951	2	0	2	68.
1952	0	0	0	0.
1953	0	0	0	0.
England and Wales, 1953				26.8.

The infantile mortality rate was lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

Analysis of Causes of Deaths. Males.....10. Females.....13.

Cause.	Males.	Females.
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	0	1.
Malignant neoplasm, lung	1	0.
Malignant neoplasm, breast	0	1.
Other malignant neoplasms	1	0.
Vascular lesions nervous system	1	0.
Coronary disease	0	1.
Other heart disease	3	8.
Other circulatory disease	1	0.
Influenza	1	0.
Bronchitis	1	1.
Other diseases respiratory system	1	0.
Accidents, not motor vehicular	0	1.

The deaths are classified under the headings given in the new Abridged List of Causes of Deaths.

Illegitimacy. The number of illegitimate births registered as belonging to residents in the district during 1953 was one.

Maternal Mortality. There was no death in the year which could be attributed to childbirth.

Section 2. General Provisions of Health Services.

Public Health Officers. There was no change in your officers during the year, Mr. E. V. Collins remaining as your Sanitary Inspector.

Laboratory Facilities. During the year laboratory facilities were available at Cardiff, Newport, Carmarthen, Swansea, Aberystwyth, Builth and Brecon. Water samples were sent to the Public Analyst for the County at Carmarthen and Cardiff whilst any investigation required in the control of infectious disease was performed by the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff.

Ambulance Facilities. As a result of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the County Council were responsible for the provision of an ambulance service and made use of the existing St. John's Ambulance for general use while ambulances from Merthyr Isolation Hospital conveyed patients suffering from infectious disease to hospital.

Home Nursing. Under the National Health Service Act, 1946, the County Council were responsible for the provision of home nursing facilities. The nurses previously partly employed by various district nursing associations were whole time employees of the County Council.

Treatment Centres and Clinics. Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics administered by the County Council are held regularly at Park House, Park Road. Ante natal clinics, immunisation clinics and facilities for the treatment of minor ailments, dental, eye and orthopaedic defects are also available.

Hospitals. The hospital needs of the residents for all diseases apart from infectious disease are provided by the Builth Wells Hospital. The arrangements for the treatment of infectious disease remain the same as in previous years. Merthyr Borough treat the patients suffering from infectious disease at Mardy Isolation Hospital. These arrangements are proving extremely satisfactory.

For the treatment of smallpox arrangements have been made by the Welsh Board of Health for beds to be available at the Penrhys Hospital, Rhondda.

Disinfection. In the main the methods used for the disinfection required have been fumigation and spraying.

Section 3. Maternity and Child Welfare.

These services are administered by the County Council and include clinics for maternity and child welfare, dental, eye and orthopaedic treatment and for expectant mothers. Provision is also made for the supply of free and cheap rate milk and medicinal foods. The supervision of midwives, child life protection and the care of premature and illegitimate infants is the responsibility of the County Council. During the year the County Council were responsible for the immunisation of children against diphtheria.

Section 4. Sanitary Circumstances.

Water Supply. The Town is supplied by (1) Tycapel reservoir which is an impounding reservoir to the open moorland catchment area. (2) Newry Well which derives water from a spring. (3) Hongwm Spring which is a piped supply to the Brecon Road Storage Reservoir. (4) Pantyllyn which is an upland lake and only used in case of emergency. (5) A Mobile Pump has been purchased by the Council to supplement the towns water supply should occasion arise. The Pump is capable of pumping far in excess of 60,000 gallons per day which will meet the needs of the community. The above sources proved adequate in quantity during the year and no pumping was necessary. The Council have so far rejected an invitation to join in a major scheme with neighbouring authorities but have engaged a consultant to advise on possible improvements to the present supply. The Council also supply water in bulk to two neighbouring authorities, Colwyn Rural District and Builth Rural District.

The Bacteriological examinations of the water during the year were found to be fairly satisfactory,17 satisfactory results being obtained and 7 unsatisfactory.The water is inclined to have a slightly plumbo solvent action on lead but all pipes are of galvanised iron and therefore this danger does not arise.

Every effort is being made to maintain a pure supply of water by protecting the various sources from likelihood of contamination.Regular inspections were made of the moorland catchment area for evidence of dead sheep etc.

All houses in the district are supplied direct with a domestic piped supply,with the exception of 7 houses which are supplied with a communal standpipe.

Careful attention to the amount of chlorination necessary was also given.

Number of samples taken during the year.....24.
Number reported as satisfactory.....17.
Number reported as unsatisfactory.....7.
No chemical examination was made during the year.
Number of visits made by the Sanitary Inspector to water supplies.231.

Drainage and Sewerage.The sewage in the district is not treated in any way but is discharged direct into the River Wye below the town.

The number of houses now not connected to a public sewer is 11, 9 have septic tanks and no nuisance is created. 2 other houses have earth closets.
Number of visits in connection with drainage work.....26.

Public Cleansing.There was no change in the methods adopted for the collection of refuse.This is collected once a week by your Council staff and disposed of by controlled tipping. No tipping takes place now on the old site,a new refuse tip having been commenced at Caor Farm.The weight of refuse collected was 843 tons during the year.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.The sanitary inspection of the area was undertaken by your Sanitary Inspector,The following details give information relating to the work of the Sanitary Inspector during the year.

Nuisances.

Number of complaints received.....13.
Number of complaints investigated.....13.
Number of premises inspected.....49.
Number of premises revisited.....160.
Number of preliminary notices served.....8.
Number of statutory notices served.....0.

Houses let in Lodgings.It is not considered that any of the houses in the district are of such a nature as to require control under bye-laws made under Section 6 of the Housing Act,1936.

Offensive Trades. There are no offensive trades in the district.

Common Lodging Houses.There are no common lodging houses in the district.

Licensed Premises.

Number of visits made by Sanitary Inspector.....34.
Number of notices served.....0.

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Shops Act.

Number of inspections made.....158.

Factories.

Number of factories on register.....22.
Number of inspections made.....88.
Number of defects found.....2.
Number of defects remedied.....2.

Camping Sites. There is no recognised camping site in the district.

Eradication of Bed Bugs and steps taken to combat infestation.

Number of premises infested.....0.

Rodent Control. This work is undertaken by one of the Council's workmen. The Cilmery refuse tip was treated twice during the year with good poison bait takes. The sewers were treated twice during the year when there were no takes of bait.
Number of premises inspected during the year.....1096.
Number of premises found infested.....25.
Estimated number of rats killed.....196.

Legal Proceedings. No legal proceedings were undertaken during the year.

Section 5. Housing. No Council houses were built during the year but consideration was given to the erection of a further 12 houses. Tenders are in the possession of the Council but are awaiting the results of a meeting with the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in connection with sewage disposal and improvements to the water supply. One other house was demolished. One house was completed by private enterprise and one reconditioned under Housing Act, 1949.

Section 6. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Milk. Since the coming into operation of the Milk and Dairies Act, 1944, the Council is left with the registration and supervision of distributors. The result of samples taken during the year are shown below.

Number of cowsheds and dairies inspected.....10.
Number of milk samples taken.....24.
Number reported as satisfactory.....20.
Number reported as unsatisfactory.....4.
Twelve samples of milk were also examined for the presence of tuberculosis with negative results in all cases.

Meat. There is no slaughterhouse in the district. All meat is supplied from the Ministry of Food Slaughtering Point at Llanellwydd. The Sanitary Inspector occasionally inspected the meat there in the absence of the Builth Rural District Sanitary Inspector.

Market Improvements. During the year a large scheme of improvement to the market was completed.

Food condemned during the year.

Amount of food condemned.....203 lbs.
Meat condemned.....Nil.
This condemned food was in tins which were all punctured and buried in the Council's tip.

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Food Preparation Rooms. (Including Bakehouses)

Number of inspections made by Sanitary Inspector.....158.
Number of notices served.....0.

Ice Cream Premises.

Number of inspections made by Sanitary Inspector.....24.
In the district there is 1 producer retailer and 6 retailers.

Preserved Food Premises.

Number of inspections made by Sanitary Inspector.....38.
There are five of these premises in the town.

Fried Fish Shops.

Number of inspections made by Sanitary Inspector.....10.
There are two fried fish shops in the town.

Byelaws under Section 15. Foods and Drugs Act,1938.

In the district the number of food premises were as follows:-
One ice cream producer retailer satisfactorily equipped with recording thermometer, six ice cream retailers selling proprietary brands from frigidaires, 4 butchers, 5 bakehouses, 8 provision shops, 2 fried fish shops, 1 wet fish shop, 6 greengrocers, 9 hotel kitchens and 2 dairies.
The number of registered premises were 29.
During the year all food retailers were circulated with an advisory booklet giving information in connection with the Clean Food Campaign.
No byelaws under this section were adopted.

Section 7.Prevalence and Control of Infectious Disease.

The following number of cases of notifiable disease were reported to me during the year.

Measles.....4 cases.
Lobar pneumonia.....1 case.

The district was therefore free of any epidemic of infectious disease and all the notified cases were nursed at their homes.Under the National Health Service Act,1946,copies of infectious disease notifications are now sent to the County Council and notification fees are refunded by the County Council to the District Council.

Venereal Disease.The County Council has an agreement with the General and Eye Hospital,Swansea,for the treatment of these cases.The tracing of contacts and the following up of defaulters is the responsibility of the County Council.

Tuberculosis.The following details show the position as regards tuberculosis in recent years.

Number of cases on register at commencement of year.....14.
Number of fresh cases notified during the year.....3.
Number of cases removed as deceased.....Nil.
Number removed from register as disease arrested.....0.
Number of cases who left the district.....1.
Number of cases left on register at end of year.....16.

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The number of cases of tuberculosis notified in recent years is shown below:-

1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.	1948.	1949.	1950.	1951.	1952.	1953.
3.	2.	2.	3.	3.	1.	4.	4.	3.	2.	3.

Diphtheria Immunisation. As a result of the National Health Service Act,1946,the County Council are responsible for the immunisation of children against diphtheria and details for the district will be found in the annual report of the County Medical Officer.

Facilities for immunisation are now available at the ordinary Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics and also at the schools during the school medical inspections.

It is pleasing to see that the incidence of diphtheria continues to fall.The object of the immunisation campaign,however,remains the same: to secure the immunisation of not less than 75% of babies before their first birthday.During the first half of 1953,however,it is disturbing to note that only 31% of the estimated number of children reaching the age of one year during this period received this protection.It must be remembered that diphtheria still kills and that elimination of the disease is conditional upon the maintenance of an adequate level of immunisation. If parents leave their children unprotected there maybe a return of diphtheria outbreaks,and there have been several sharp reminders of this possibility during the year under review.

No cases of diphtheria were notified during the year.

Yours faithfully,

T.C.R.George,

Medical Officer of Health.